45 STANDARD FORM NO. 64

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RMW45

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

EXCISE

TO : WE - Mr. Achilles

DATE: May 31, 1950

FROM : WE - Mr. Winfree

SUBJECT: Belgian Elections

Parliamentary elections are scheduled to be held in Belgium this coming Sunday, June 4, 1950. You will recall that the Belgium Parliament was dissolved on April 30, 1950, when negotiations regarding the return of Leopold broke down on the question of whether or not Leopold was to reside in Belgium while his son served as regent.

There has not been a great deal of campaigning for this election by any of the parties, a fact which is rather surprising in view of the deep feeling in Belgium on the Royal question. This lack of campaigning may be due to the exhaustion of the party "War Chests" since very large sums were spent in preparing for the recent popular referendum which resulted in a 57.6% vote for Leopold.

The three major parties, Catholics, Liberals and the Socialists, have not brought foreign affairs into their platforms but are basing their stands on purely domestic issues. The Communists, of course, could not lose an opportunity to oppose the ECA and Atlantic Pact. They also included a special plank in their platform calling for the "cessation of furnishing Congo strategic materials to the American imperialists". The results of these elections are any body's guess. Our Embassy believes that the Liberals will lose to both the Socialists and the PSC; that the PSC will obtain a slight majority; that Leopold will turn over to Baudouin but will then reside in the provinces, not in Brussels; [redacted] B-1

[redacted] Only two things seem certain, (1) that the Communists will continue to lose ground and (2) that no matter what the outcome of the Royal question will be we will continue to have the wholehearted support of the Belgian Government and people.

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INCOMING TELEGRAM

Department of State

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Control: Rec'd 2062 June 6, 1950 12:39 a.m.

EXCISE (OVER)

FROM: Brussels

TO: Secretary of State

NO: 385, June 5, 6 p.m.

Ministry Interior has released following unofficial election results:

	CHAMBER			SENATE		
Parties	1950	(1949)	Gain or Loss of Seats	1950	(1949)	Gain or Loss of Seats
PSC	108	105	3	54	54	0
Socialists	76	66	+10	39	33	+6
Liberals	21	29	-8	-10	14	-4
Communists	7	12	-5	3	5	-2
Total	212	212		106	106	

Distribution of remaining 69 Senate seats will not be known until June 20 but will presumably follow same pattern.

PSC has obtained majority of 2 in Chamber and it is virtually certain it will retain a Senate majority. PSC made gains Flanders; Socialists in Walloon area and Brussels. [redacted] increase of Socialist strength far more than expected and PSC somewhat less.

As expected Liberals lost most heavily Flanders apparently due party leaders opposition Leopold.

Communists loss probably caused by weak party leadership and Belgium's economic health.

Reported Eyskens will be called palace this evening to commence negotiations. If he accepts will presumably make standard visit Pregny. Next name mentioned after Eyskens is Duvieusart.

Since PSC

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VJ

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Since PSC majority so slight negotiations may be lengthy. New Parliament scheduled meet June 20.

Total vote returns not yet available.

MURPHY

JAK:CEI